

Leisure

An Introduction

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In 1899, Veblen wrote *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, coining the term of 'conspicuous consumption' and with it pairing the idea of leisure with both class and consumption. Since then, leisure has branched out into a variety of phenomenon, which are based on social distinctions, cultural differences, and most of all, technological development and invention of the Internet. Thus, the definition of leisure has become dependent on the context in which it is experienced, the perspective a particular researcher has on a particular object or situation or group of people.

Still, leisure is a basic human activity, which can be grasped and defined by its transformative potential according to Holba (2013, *Transformative Leisure. A Philosophy of Communication*). Using her division of leisure into recreation defined by "rest, relaxation, or idleness", and transformative leisure, defined through the "cultivation of thinking, acting, and being", a framework for understanding both leisurely activities, and the apparently opposing labour and work activities. Because of this, Holba's article *Leisure as a Philosophical Act* can be seen as both an introduction and basic framework for this issue of *Academic Quarter*. When leisure becomes a philosophical act and a philosophy of communication, it provides a

different kind of mindset and understanding, than Veblen's focus on consumption and hedonism. At the same time, defining leisure from a philosophical viewpoint takes away the traditional dichotomy between leisure and work, which is used extensively in (Stebbins, 2012, *The Idea of Leisure: First Principles*). As several of the articles in this edition will show the difference between leisure and work is vanishing, leisure becoming work, work becoming leisure.

Needless to say, further research is necessary to account for and describe the changes in the perception and doing of leisure.

Annette M. Holba, *Leisure as a Philosophical Act*. While Holba has laid out her philosophy of transformative leisure earlier (2013), with this article she takes the idea of community and communication into the realm of fandom and participatory culture.

Karl Spracklen, *From Playful Pleasure to Dystopian Control: Marx, Gramsci, Habermas and the Limits of Leisure*. Spracklen's view on contemporary leisure takes on a dark turn, when he points to the capitalistic and elitist power over leisurely activities. Thus, Spracklen frames his approach to leisure through a dystopian view of the Habermasian lifeworld, as it is controlled by the powers of capitalism. Thus, he poses the antithesis to Holba's transformative leisure, and provides the basis for a different approach to leisure.

Brian Russell Graham, *Northrop Frye on Leisure as Activity*. Graham provides yet another perspective on leisure, based on Frye's discussion of leisure versus boredom, and his division of human activities into industry, politics, and leisure. Like Frye, Graham draws heavily on Bourdieu's perspective on class and habitus.

Charlotte Wegener, Karen Ingerslev, and Ninna Meier, *Drinking coffee at the workplace: Work or leisure?* Delving into the problem of categorisation, Wegener, Ingerslev, and Meier show how the practice of drinking coffee can initiate a discussion of practices and definitions concerning work and leisure.

Tina Jørgensen and Anette Therkelsen, *Working out who you are. Identity formation among fitness tourists*. Focusing on identity formation through fitness travels, Jørgensen and Therkelsen provide a

basic classification in using leisure activities, experiences, and communities on the continuum of differentiation - dedifferentiation. Fitness tourism is looked into from a consumerist perspective.

Jørgen Riber Christensen, Julie Cecilie Hansen, Frederik Holm Larsen, and Jesper Sig Nielsen, *From Snapshot to Snapchat: Panopticon or Synopticon?* Using a threefold approach to investigate whether Snapchat can be characterised as a product of the panopticon or of the synopticon, the authors set out to analyse the Snapchat platform.

Ricardo Vidal Torres and Lorna Heaton, *When does leisure become work? An exploration of Foldit*. With Stebbins notion of serious leisure as their framework, Torres and Heaton examine the online puzzle game of *Foldit*. While the game provides the basis for non-science users to participate in scientific discoveries, changes in the gameplay influence the experiences of the gamers and their willingness to participate.

Sebastian F. K. Svegaard, *Critical Vidders. Fandom, Critical Theory and Media*. With a feminist based approach to vidding, the fan created remix of videos, Svegaard examines how the use of spreadable media could provide better representation in media products.

Lars Konzack, *Mark Rein•Hagen's Foundational Influence on 21st Century Vampiric Media*. Konzack analyses, how a role-playing game influences not only mainstream media, but at the same time is the basis of developing communities and narratives, explored and maintained within a leisurely context.

Mirjam Vosmeer, Jeroen Jansz, and Liesbet van Zoonen, *I'd like to have a house like that. Female players of The Sims*. With the videogame *The Sims* as their fulcrum, the authors examine how female players use the game to develop ICT skills, as well as create a free space for leisure activities, which enable the players to fantasize about their everyday life.

Ole Ertlöv Hansen, *Casual Games. Digitale fritidsspil*. The article provides a framework to understand the motivational aspects of play-

ing casual games as a leisurely activity. Hansen's focus is on different motivational states and their influence on pleasurability.

Tove A. Rasmussen and Thomas Mosebo Simonsen, *Fritid er produktiv tid i den audiovisuelle mediekultur*. With Colin Campbell's (2005) revision of Max Weber as their framework, Rasmussen and Simonsen set out to discuss the notions of leisure, media, and consumption in the light of reality TV and Vlogs on Youtube. Their main points being the performance and presentation of the self, and the mastering of the media involved.

Michael Wagner, *The Honey Trap - The democratization of leisure through automobilism and its consequences*. Wagner's article revolves around the relationship between man and his beloved car. Tracing the history of this relationship from the early 20th century until today, Wagner shows, how it still shapes the democratic processes of Danish politics here and now.

Bo Poulsen and Trine Bundgaard, *Digitalt dilemma*. Poulsen and Bundgaard analyse the partial digitalisation of a museum exhibit at Sæby Museum in Denmark. While the younger generation finds the exhibit engaging, it alienates the more mature museum visitors.

Robert Winstanley-Chesters, *The Socialist Modern at Rest and Play: Spaces of Leisure in North Korea*. Taking the notoriously closed nature of North Korea into account, Winstanley-Chesters manages to show, how the political system supports and embed leisurely activities. Thus, North Korea expands its narrative and ideology through the appropriation of their citizens' free time.

Tem Frank Andersen and Thessa Jensen, *Whereever I lay my device, that's my home. Revisiting the concept of domestication in the Age of Mobile Media and Wearable Devices*. Using several different case studies as its background, the paper examines the notion of leisure and domestication in different settings.

References

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- Holba, Annette M. *Transformative Leisure. A Philosophy of Communication*. Marquette University Press, 2013.
- Stebbins, Robert A. *The Idea of Leisure: First Principles*. New Brunswick, N.J: Transaction Publishers, 2012. <https://www.dropbox.com/s/abisxkyz47mjm7y/Stebbins2012.pdf?dl=0>.